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ABSTRACT

A study examined identification and consistency theory of interface between rhetorical and communication theory, to demonstrate the compatibility of specific principles in Kenneth Burke's theory with those in the work of Fritz Heider and other consistency theorists and to make suggestions toward a Burkeian theory of identification through consistency. Three assumptions about human psychology are at the base of all consistency research: first, humans possess a strong need for cognitive consistency; second, this human need for consistency is the basis of psychological tension when it is not fulfilled; and third, the psychological discomfort produced by inconsistency initiates an effort on the part of the individual to reduce or eliminate the tension. Therefore, consistency theory makes a fourth and fundamental assumption, common to all major theories of cognitive consistency: humans are motivated to participate in consistent relationships. From this point of commonality, however, the theories diverge, adopting different assumptions and defining consistency differently. Results showed identification can be achieved by the speaker who maintains a consistent relationship with a particular sympathetic audience. Such an identification through consistency is made possible by perceived audience-speaker similarity which is comprised of common background, common judgment or evaluation of an issue or group, and the generally perceived condition of "common ground." More specifically, identification is possible when the listener aligns himself or herself in the same manner as the speaker. This alignment is produced by either association or dissociation, especially in political situations. (Sixty-one notes are attached.) (RAE)

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RHETORICAL AND COMMUNICATION THEORY: AN AREA OF INTERFACE

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The linkages among rhetorical and communication theory within the field of communication studies have been the subject of much discussion and debate. A resolution of this on-going dispute is probably impossible and certainly lies outside the scope of this paper. Rather, the purpose of this study is to examine one particular area of interface between rhetorical and communication theory, that of identification and consistency theory. Especially, we wish to demonstrate the compatibility of specific principles in Kenneth Burke's theory with those in the work of Heider and other consistency theorists and to make suggestions toward a Burkeian theory of identification through consistency.

The expression, "A friend of yours is a friend of mine," exemplifies one of the basic human tendencies isolated by consistency theory. Proponents of this theory hold as basic to their research the notion that people require a certain amount of cognitive organization to their thoughts and perceptions, especially as they regard interpersonal relationships. In keeping with the spirit of the adage above, this cognitive organization should provide as little conflict among elements as possible. An individual's perception of other people and, in turn, both the perceiver's and the perceived's perception of some person, object, or idea are the subject matter of consistency theory. When one of these components happens to be in a conflicting relationship with the other two, the entire relationship is classified as inconsistent.

At the base of all consistency research are three underlying assumptions about human psychology. First, humans possess a strong need for cognitive consistency. The Gestalt school of psychology has proposed that people integrate their thoughts and perceptions into unified patterns. The term "gestalt" itself has come to describe cognitive units evaluatively.

If a group of perceptions form a "good gestalt" their relationship is consistent. In such instances, none of the isolated perceptual relationships conflict with any other in the entire situation.[1] Lewin claimed that individuals cluster cognitions into "cognitive wholes"[2] and the resultant set could thus be classified as either consistent or inconsistent. A good gestalt requires not only that cognitions be organized but they must also be consistent with one another.

Second , consistency theorists agree that this human need for consistency is the basis of "psychological tension" when it is not fulfilled.[3] Should an individual perceive that (s)he is part of an inconsistent relationship (s)he will be uncomfortable. According to Heider, such an individual may realize "that the factors in the situation 'do not add up'; they seem to pull in different directions." On the other hand, Heider describes consistent relationships to be "without stress" to the perceiver because all the components coexist in a state of harmony.[4] The most comfortable situation in which an individual can exist is a harmonious one. Except in those situations in which inconsistency, and thus psychological tension, is somehow pleasant to us, we will, according to this theory, seek to make an adjustment.

This need to adjust inconsistent relationships is the third assumption made about human psychology by consistency theory. If we discover that we are a part of an inconsistent relationship, we will strive to make it consistent in some way. The psychological discomfort produced by inconsistency initiates an effort on the part of the individual to reduce or eliminate the tension, and several avenues toward this end have been discussed in the literature.[5] Heider claims that inconsistent situations "leave us with a feeling of disturbance that becomes relievedonly when change within the situation takes place in such a way that a state of balance is

achieved."[6] Therefore, consistency theory makes a fourth, and very fundamental, assumption: Humans are motivated to participate in consistent relationships. Their need for consistency, and the psychological tension which accompanies its absence, instigates a psychological reaction which is an attempt to harmonize inconsistent relationships. This assumption is common to all major theories of cognitive consistency.

Major Consistency Theories

The volume of literature concerning cognitive consistency is vast. Interest in this area has produced so much research, in fact, that several books have been compiled which are either partially or entirely devoted to the review and criticism of that research.[7] Certain writers, whose research is definitive among consistency theorists, and upon whose work nearly all other writers in this field are dependent, have emerged as the most significant theorists.

Many of these writers' theories appeared in the 1950's. Although their names varied, the theories were quite similar because they shared one basic concept or principle of consistency. This is the principle, as outlined above, that humans have a tendency to attempt to reduce or eliminate inconsistencies among relationships between people, thoughts beliefs, values, feelings, and actions due to the psychological discomfort produced by such an inconsistency.[8] From this point of commonality, however, the theories diverge, adopting different assumptions and defining consistency differently.[9]

Balance Theory

Of all the work produced under the broad heading of "consistency theory," the most salient and exclusive are the theories of balance[10] and cognitive dissonance.[11] In 1946, Heider developed the triadic theory of balance. Several other writers provided elaborations of this basic theory adding what each considered to be improvements and assigning different names to their "new" theories. We will address the most important of these shortly.

Heider's triadic theory of balance accounts for the consistency or inconsistency of a person's relationship with another person as it coexists with each of their perceptions of yet another person, object, or idea. Heider provides one-letter codes to symbolize these components of the triadic relationship. First of all, any interpersonal relationship must include at least two people. Heider labels one of these individuals "P", and the other "O". Balance theory examines P's relationship with both O and some person, object, or idea, which is labelled "X". If P, O, and X enjoy a consistent relationship, their situation is classified as "balanced." Conversely, their situation is "unbalanced" if the relationship between P, O, and X is inconsistent.

Heider classified the cognitive organization between the three as balanced (consistent) if the product of the links between P, O, and X is positive. The links in this case are the respective perceptions P has of O, P has of X, and O has of X. These perceptions are evaluative in nature and must be determined (by the consistency theorist in each case) to be of either a positive or negative value.

We should note here that Heider delineates between two types of links or relations: sentiment and unit. Heider explains the first type of

evaluative link, the sentiment relation.

> A sentiment refers to the way a person p feels about or evaluates something. The "something" may be another person, o, or an impersonal entity x. Sentiments may be roughly classified as positive and negative. We shall speak of positive sentiments in a relation of liking between p and another entity, and of negative sentiments in a relation of disliking. Finer distinctions among sentiments such as those between like and love or between dislike and hate will be disregarded for our present purpose.[12]

Heider's disregard for such "finer distinctions" has been criticized. Keisler, Collins, and Miller note that Heider's theoretical approach is flawed due to its lack of any "provision for variation in intensity" of sentiment relations. Osgood and Tannenbaum's theory of congruity, which will be treated in this section later, provides a rationalization for the presence of this flaw. In their words,

> . . . judgmental frames of reference tend towards maximal simplicity. Since extreme, "all-or-nothing" judgments are simpler than finely discriminated judgments of degree, this implies continuing pressure toward polarization along the evaluative dimension . . .[14]

They make reference to the "two-valued orientation which general semanticists claim is unsane"[15] and "characteristic of less intelligent, less mature, less well educated, and more emotionally oriented individuals."[16] Osgood and Tannenbaum are not asserting here that consistency theory only applies to this population, but that their recognition of the general human tendency to make extreme, "black and white" judgments is an "underlying notion about human thinking" which is basic to their theory.[17]

The criticism of Heider's two-valued approach is valid in the general sense. The distinction between "like" and "dislike" in many situations is too broad and theoretically unreflective of the complexity of sentiment in real-life relationships. Some authors have tried to improve the construct

on this ground by allowing for gradations of judgment.[18]

However, circumstances frequently arise which demand, even of the most sophisticated and intelligent individuals, a regression to the two-valued orientation. The citizen in the voting booth is an excellent example. When faced with the decision of voting for either candidate A or candidate B, the voter is forced into the two-valued mode. Gradations between the two cannot apply since the voter's endorsement can only fall on one side. To the extent that a candidate perceives portions of the electorate as either for or against that individual, this orientation is appropriat This two-valued mode is also operant when a legislator is forced to either support or oppose a certain policy. This is not to say that particular candidates are advised to address only sympathetic audiences, but that Heider's construct is especially appropriate to the study of political rhetorical criticism.

The second type of relation Heider speaks of is the unit relation. A unit relation is not so much determined to be of positive or negative value as it is merely marked present or not present. Heider posits that P, O, or X can be linked with one another in a unit relationship "when they are perceived as belonging together." Heider lists such unit relationships as those existing between family members and "a person and his deed."[19] These examples are not difficult to recognize as unit relations. Members of a family are bonded together by flesh and blood, and the results of a person's actions (e.g. footprints, fingerprints, an artist's sculpture) are so closely associated with the individual that they become a representation of the individual himself. A unit formation may come into existence as a result of one or more of the following factors: "similarity, common fate, good continuation, set, and past

experience." Of note also is the possibility that these factors are capable of producing "social units."[20]

Reviewers of Heider's balance theory have also criticized his conceptualization of the unit relation. The strongest complaint is that Heider has not provided us with the necessary means for detecting the presence of a unit relation.[21] Later theorists circumvent this problem by incorporating different types of relations beyond the sentiment and unit types[22] or by simply reducing the number of types, as in Abelson and Rosenberg's creation of only one relationship type which they call "affective." We will explore the unit relation concept much more extensively in the section on identification.

The principles of Heider's theory are central to this endeavor. The principles of sentiment relation and unit relation are the basis of association/dissociation and the concept of identification respectively. In brief, Heider's statement of the principles of consistency is as follows:

> By a balanced state is meant a situation in which the relations among the entities fit together harmoniously; there is no stress toward change. A basic assumption is that sentiment relations and unit relations tend toward a balanced state. This means that sentiments are not entirely independent of the perception of unit connections between entities and that the latter, in turn, are not entirely independent of sentiments. Sentiment and unit relations are mutually interdependent. It also means that if a balanced state does not exist, then forces toward this state will arise. If a change is not possible, the state of imbalance will produce tension.[23]

Variations on Heider's Model

In light of the many criticisms of Heider's theory, each of the variations of balance theory attempts to address some of the basic model's inadequacies. Major research along this line includes work

performed by Newcomb, Cartwright and Harary, Abelson and Rosenberg, and Osgood and Tannenbaum.[24]

Let us now address briefly the research of those who followed Heider's lead and developed similar theories of their own. Newcomb's strain toward symmetry concept is very similar to Heider but marks, along with others, the field's departure from Heider's strictly theoretical consideration of consistency into a more predictive orientation, addressing the concept as it applies to the process of attitude change.[25] Generally, this orientation seeks to support the assertion that inconsistency plays a role in inducing attitude change. Once an individual is alerted to the presence of a personal cognitive inconsistency, his drive to restore consistency will include some form of attitude change.[26]

The structural balance theory set forth by Cartwright and Harary attempted to scrutinize relationships objectively so they could be described by the scientist rather than a given, subjective P. This would accommodate information to which P was possibly not privy (for instance, O's sentiment toward P). Structural balance theory allows for the consideration of more than three entities, attempts to account for the opposite and the complement of a relationship, and quantifies the degree of balance therein.[27] Most importantly, Cartwright and Harary sought to remove the judgment of a relationship's balance from the subjective cognitive realm of the perceiver by addressing relationships as individual structures rather than experiences had by P.[28] Kiesler, Collins, and Miller explain that, while this is a commendable goal, it cannot be completely achieved since we remain tied to the subject's description of his perception. In their words:

> Suppose we wish to ascertain the degree of balance in sociometric matrix and we ask our subjects to list liked and disliked group members. For a given person, P, it is clear where we obtain his likes and dislikes: we ask him. But how about the reciprocal choices? Are we to ask P for his perception of who likes and dislikes him, or are we to ask the others in the group if each of them likes or dislikes P? Heider would clearly prefer the former, but the structural approach emphasizes the latter.[29]

Nevertheless, Heider is not completely off base. Since consistency theory rests, in part, upon the assumption that imbalanced states cause psychological tension, the subjective orientation is, at particular stages of inquiry, necessary. Furthermore, since it is purported that this tension induces change, we must be able to confirm the existence of that psychological phenomenon in order to predict change.

Abelson and Rosenberg concur with Cartwright and Harary that Heider's approach is not systematic enough because it is too heavily oriented in the mind of P. They also recognize that reality is more complex than the simple P-O-X triad. Their theory altered the relation terminology to include such terms as "possesses," "promotes," "is equivalent to," and "advocates," in the hope such terms would make the theory more precise. However, sentiment and unit relations are combined under the broader heading of "affective" relations.[30] Methods of restoring consistency (attitude change) are here also central.[31]

McGuire's treatment of consistency theory introduces the principles of formal logic to cognitions. He also argues that humans have a tendency to engage in "wishful thinking" so that beliefs are consistent with "desires or wishes."[32] As stated earlier, this is also merely an elaboration of Heider's basic theory.

Osgood and Tannenbaum define their theory of congruity in terms of the degree and direction of attitude change. The principle of congruity

stated by Osgood and Tannenbaum has change at its core: "changes in evaluation are always in the direction of increased congruity with the existing frame of reference."[33] Congruity is only threatened, and thus pressure to change applied, when two conflicting "objects of judgment" are associated.[34] The writers' concern in developing this theory is in honing the ability to predict attitude change; both its degree and direction. They attempt this by assigning relative positive or negative values to the links between Heider's P, O, and X and, as McGuire points out, "they introduced quantification of individual links, the polarity principle, the assertion constant, and the correction for incredulity."[35]

In sum, Osgood and Tannenbaum's theory, as it lends itself to the purposes of this study, offers two important items. First, it is Osgood and Tannenbaum who employ the terminology adopted here: associative and dissociative. In their system a source says something about an object which is either good (an "associative bond") or bad (a "dissociative bond").[36] Second , they implicitly address the issue of identification as it applies to balance theory.

According to the rules of balance theory, only eight variations of cognitive organization are possible with any given P, O, and X. Four of these states are balanced and four are unbalanced.[37] If we isolate those variations in which P enjoys a positive sentiment for O we are left with only two opportunities for consistency. In both of these situations, P and O must feel the same way about X; either they "like" it or "dislike" it. In cases where P likes O but disagrees with O regarding X, balance will be threatened.

In light of the fact that P and O are similar in their concern for X, it follows that the relationship between P, O, and X is conducive to

the possibility that P will have some affinity for O. Since P and O agree on X, they will find it easier to "get along" with one another than if they held different opinions concerning X. This simple observation of balance theory coincides with the basic principle of identification theory: similar entities identify with one another much easier than dissimilar entities.[38] If it can be shown that a positive link between P and O is accompanied by links similar in value between P and X, and O and X respectively, then it can be inferred that the relationship between P, O, and X is fertile ground for identification between P and O. Herein resides the first major premise of this thesis: P, by virtue of P's affection for O and their concurrent opinion of X, will identify with O.

The Principles of Identification

Any discussion of the principles of identification is extremely dependent on the writings of Kenneth Burke. In his book, A Rhetoric of Motives, Burke develops the concept of identification which he considers pivotal in the entire process of rhetoric and persuasion, and constitutes the central concept of his "new" rhetoric. Marie Hochmuth explains the importance of this concept in Burke's theory:

> (T)he difference between the "old" and the "new" rhetoric may be summed up in this manner: whereas the key term for the "old" rhetoric was persuasion and its stress upon deliberate design, the key term for the "new" rhetoric is identification and this may include partially 'unconscious' factors in its appeal. Identification, at its simplest level, may be a deliberate device, or a means, as when a speaker identifies his interests with those of his audience. But identification can also be an "end," . . . .[39]

Thus, Burke claims that identification is a concept so large that it can embody a technique employed toward the goal of rhetoric or identification can itself be the intended goal of the rhetor.

Therefore, Burke characterizes identification, insomuch as it applies to rhetoric, on two levels. Identification is either a social and psychological force capable of unifying separate entities, or the social/psychological union achieved as a result of the employment of its principles. This union can be realized by the speaker who emphasizes audience-speaker similarities and designates their points of common interest. Burke explains that "identification ranges from the politician who, addressing an audience of farmers, says, 'I was a farm boy myself,' through the mysteries of social status, to the mystic's devout identification with the source of all being."[40] He claims that, while people are never identical to each other, they can nonetheless be identified with one another "insofar as their interests are joined." If in reality people's interests are not joined, identification may still occur if one or both are "persuaded to believe" that they are.[41]

Two important principles in Burke's definition of identification are similarity and "consubstantiality."[42] Both of these principles may be capitalized upon by the speaker who wishes to achieve identification with the audience.

Similarity

The first principle has been isolated in research and treated as a variable. Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer compiled a review of the research on similarity as it affected credibility and thus attitude change. Similarity, as an agent in identification, falls under the area of social attraction. Theoretically, audiences which perceive communicators as similar to themselves are more easily persuaded. Advertisers, the authors note, exploit this technique when they provide "spokespersons" from certain interest groups to endorse a product. Thus, theories of social attraction

posit a positive relationship between similarity and credibility.[43] In this respect, audiences look for a speaker to accentuate points of common interest, belief, and background before they assign the rhetor a high level of credibility. However, these writers point out that similarity can become a liability if it threatens the audience's perception of the speaker's expertise.[44]

Laying this exception aside, the reviewers of this theory expound its central assertion "that various types of similarity and dissimilarity have differential effects on various credibility factors and the different components of credibility in turn have differential effects on message acceptance."[45] Accordingly, there are four types of similarity: attitudinal and membership-group, as well as relevant and irrelevant. Attitudinal similarities are subjectively ascertained by auditors and they include interests, beliefs, and feelings. In the example above, the student audience and the nuclear physicist are similar attitudinally: they share a similar sentiment toward nuclear energy. On the other hand, membership-group similarities are more "readibly observable characteristics" than attitudes. Such similarities comprise a "shared demography" of origin and background. Burke's example of the politician who grew up on a farm, like the members of his audience, is an illustration of the membership-group similarity.

The difference between relevant and irrelevant similarities is that reference to relevant similarities is logically related to the proposition, while reference to irrelevant similarities is employed opportunistically, "cited only to gain rapport."[46] An example of an irrelevant reference to similarity would be the speaker who, addressing an audience in her or his home town of Chicago concerning the evils of nuclear energy, points up the fact

that the audience and the rhetor share certain demographic data (membership-group). He specifically states that he is also from Chicago. The fact that both speaker and audience are citizens of that city has virtually nothing to do with that speaker's proposition, that nuclear energy is bad. While it may be evidence of the rhetor's empathy for the audience, it in no way supports her or his case. In addition, this speaker may make an irrelevant reference to the commonly held belief concerning the sanctity of the Constitution. The rhetorically adept listener might wisely ask what this attitudinal similarity has to do with a case for or against nuclear energy.

On the other hand, relevant similarities are explicitly employed as supporting material. In the example above, if the speaker from Chicago agrees with the audience that cancer from over-radiation is terrible, that attitudinal similarity is relevant to a discussion about nuclear energy. In fact, without it a rhetor would have a difficult time supporting a case against nuclear energy.

A speaker's image or credibility is a function of both the listener's "cognitive" process as well as "affective" process. A speaker who addresses the cognitive processes stands to induce the listener's respect by capitalizing on expertise and prestige, while the speaker who addresses the affective processes accentuates attraction through likeability and friendliness.[47] Both of these credibility factors are influenced by similarity but the effect is different in each instance.

Similarity between speaker and listener has more power on the affective bases than it does on the cognitive. Similarity is more capable, in other words, of activating the processes which generate attraction toward the source than it is capable of activating the processes which generate

respect. Simons and associates note at this point that respect and trust have more power than attraction in producing a favorable attitude toward the source's position.[48] Therefore, similarity plays a limited role in enhancing credibility and in turn an even more limited role in producing attitude change. We must infer, then, that reference to audience-speaker similarity is more closely related to pathos than it is to logos since the affective processes are more closely associated with humans' emotional side than they are the logical, and the cognitive processes are more closely related to human's logical side than they are the emotional.

Consubstantiality

The second principle of identification regards that which separate entities genuinely share. Burke calls this principle "consubstantiality."[49] Arguing that, despite their individuality, separate parties share portions of substance, Burke thus claims that one is consubstantial with another in that certain of their motives are shared while others are distinctly separate. In his words:

> In being identified with B, A is 'substantially one' with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another.[50]

To illustrate, Burke provides the example of parent-child consubstantiality: while the child is undoubtedly "apart" from the parents, (s)he is nonetheless derived from them. Certain portions of substance are separate while others are shared. Rosenfeld clarified the consubstantiality principle by employing the concepts and terminology of set theory. Consubstantiality, or identification, occurs in situations where separate "sets" intersect with "the sharing of a common element."[51]

This concept can thus be extended to include shared principles, loyalties, and causes.[52] Such social identification is easily exemplified by the Biblical passage wherein we are told that Peter sought to dispel his "identification" with Jesus mainly because Peter feared their "consubstantiality" would have brought them both ill fate.[53] Day writes that it is in this principle of consubstantiality that Burke's "philosophical basis" of identification resides:

> Any sensation, concept, image, idea, or attitude which we use to identify 'substance' Burke calls a 'property.' And when two 'substances' share in a common 'property' they are said to be 'consubstantial.'[54]

Burke's principle of consubstantiality can thus be further extended to the formation of social groups, highlighting the "substance" shared by members of the group, one with the other, and the "substance" shared by the group and its designated leader. The strength of this consubstantiality is increased in cases where groups and leaders associate by choice due to similar values and goals.[55] In this respect, consubstantiality assists leaders in their effort to maintain social or political cohesion. Hayakawa's treatment of this topic illustrates that all relationships that endure do so because of a natural human tendency to seek interpersonal union through language.[56] After initial approval is granted, the relationship must be strengthened. The mere fact that an audience is listening to a rhetor is evidence of their social approval of the speaker, at least to a certain extent. However, to make them seriously consider the message and advocate its policies, and attempt to reinforce their closeness (or accentuate their consubstantiality) is helpful. The use of identification can help achieve such a social proximity.

Burke claims that the very purpose of rhetoric is best served by identification because rhetoric is primarily concerned with reducing disagreement and mending the division between factions. He claims that since rhetoric "considers the ways in which individuals are at odds with one another, or become identified with groups more or less at odds with one another,"[57] it follows that a rhetor should revere the use of identification in an attempt to close any such gap, to minimize animosity and resolve ideological differences. Identification can be called one of the ties that binds and it is called to action precisely because men are divided. Identification is capable of quelling destructive conflict and initiating cooperation and agreement. Rhetoric, Burke asserts, "is concerned with the state of Babel after the fall."[58] Therefore, if our differences divide us, then perhaps our similarities can bring us together. The rhetor's task then, is to emphasize these commonalities and persuade opposing factions to cooperate. Identification, in Burke's theory, is the best rhetorical device with which to create such communion, and the rhetorical goal most worthy of pursuit.

Identification Through Consistency

Now that we have reviewed the theories of consistency and identification individually, we will discover how these theories are related. The concepts of Heider and Burke are structurally similar in certain respects and, in conjunction, provide a useful basis for a theory of identification through consistent association/dissociation. The premise of a theory of identification through consistency is that the two traditional theories are connected on two conceptual levels. Both theories deal mainly with how audiences perceive a source (1) in relation to an object or idea and, (2) in relation to themselves. Comparing the terminology of Heider and Burke respectively, the

sentiment relation describes the same phenomena as the similarity principle and the sentiment and unit relations together describe the same phenomena as the consubstantiality principle. Let us explore in detail how these concepts are connected.

Sentiment/Similarity Connection

The most obvious form of identification is achieved when the source's relationship with a given object or idea is shown to be similar to the audience's relationship with that object or idea. For example, if a positively aligned speaker and audience are each negatively aligned with the object of the speaker's message, their relationship is consistent. Both source and receiver in this case, who like each other, dissociate themselves from the object of the speaker's message. The consistency theorist examines the sentiment relationships and declares the situation "balanced" or "consistent." The identification theorist examines the similarity of attitudes and declares the situation fertile rhetorical soil for the achievement of identification.

As we have noticed however, Burke argues that identification may occur in less rhetorically favorable (less balanced) situations. Indeed, identification devices are quite useful in situations where audience-speaker views differ, and hence, where their relationship is inconsistent. Specifically, the variables of membership-group and irrelevant similarities may lead to identification when a source's views are not consistent with those of his audience. Nevertheless, identification is most likely to occur when the speaker's stated views are consistent with those of the audience. The rhetor who operates within a consistent relationship with the audience achieves a specific kind of identification and probably does so to a greater extent than the source whose relationship is inconsistent.

Despite some theoretical intricacies, we can see the sentiment/similarity connection between these theories. Thus, the two theories can be incorporated because both are concerned with the triadic relationship of source, receiver, and message-object. A source is capable of achieving identification if the relationship with the audience, in terms of the message, is consistent, provided the audience's perception is positive. Using the terminology of congruity theory,[59] a source must associate with those objects or ideas with which the audience would associate, and must also dissociate from those items with which the audience would dissociate.

Let us for a moment imagine that we have before us a triad with only two of the relationships known. In our imaginary triad, both the source and the audience feel negatively toward an object or idea, but the relationship between the audience and the speaker is unknown to us. If consistency theory is an accurate description of the real world, we can predict that the audience must feel positively toward the source in order to have a consistent situation. For, after all, the audience has dissociated from that with which the source is dissociated. The only consistent relationship would be for the audience to align themselves on the side of the speaker. The same would, of course, hold true if both source and audience associated with a given object or idea.

In the political realm, we notice the importance of issue alignment and issue-group alignment. As constituents and potential voters, we pay special attention to the manner in which a politician aligns with particular issues and interest groups. Upon scrutinizing these relationships, we are led to support, even vote for, the person who aligns in a similar way with the issues and groups with which we align ourselves.

Therefore, our respective alignments play a crucial role in the process of identification due to the implications brought to bear by the relative consistency of those alignments. A political alignment is merely a series of associations and dissociations, and a given politician's alignment with issues and groups is what leads us to place that individual at a particular spot on the political spectrum. Hence, Ronald Reagan's alignment with the interests of big business, increased military expenditures, and a strong foreign policy against communism encourages us to label him a "conservative." Other citizens whom align themselves similarly fall into Reagan's political camp and also reside on the right-hand side of the spectrum. Accordingly, the formation of alignments and, thus, camps is a function of the rhetoric of identification through consistent association/dissociation. Consistency in this regard requires that a receiver (P: the perceiver of the source) and a source (O: the perceiver of a number of issues and interest groups) have similar alignments.

We have already seen that identification is dependent upon the variable of similarity, and that of the eight possible cognitive variations proposed by consistency theory, only two offer the necessary conditions for identification. In the rhetorical situation, the listener must feel positively about the rhetor and must agree with the speaker regarding the object of the message in order to enjoy a consistent relationship. This being true, a speaker can approach identification by establishing consistent relationships (one of the above two) with the audience. This approach need not be intentional; the speaker does not have to target certain audience members for identification.

Sentiment-Unit/Consubstantiality Connection

Identification and consistency theories are not only related in their emphasis upon similarity of alignment.. The strongest evidence of a theoretical intersection between consistency and identification theories are the related principles of Heider's sentiment/unit relations and Burke's consubstantiality. In the preceding passage we examined how the similarity of audience-speaker sentiments is a condition for identification through consistency, but the unit relation also comes into play in the process of identification. A listener is prone to identify with a source (O) that is a component of a unit relation perceived by that listener. If an audience member feels that (s)he and the speaker "belong together", as a result of the unit forming factors suggested by Heider,[60] then the stage has been set for identification between the two.

Heider's concept of belonging together on a perceptural level is very similar to Burke's concept of consubstantiality. We recall that the term "consubstantiality" refers to the state experienced by separate entities which share substance. If the substance shared happens to be interests, values, or opinions, identification on the rhetorical level may occur if this consubstantiality is called to the attention of the listener.[61] Therefore, the concepts of unit relation and consubstantiality both address the same phenomenon when applied to the public speaking situation: the perception of a listener (P) that (s)he belongs in the same camp as the source (O), that they share certain attitudes and beliefs. P, O, and X form a good "gestalt" because they are, in part, consubstantial. When consubstantiality is perceived, identification may then follow.

The rhetoric of identification can now include in its terminology Heider's unit relation because it so closely resembles Burke's concept of consubstantiality. Therefore, a receiver could hardly recognize

consubstantiality with the speaker without first noticing that their sentiment relations exist without conflict and, then, that realizing the speaker to be in a unit relation with the auditor.

In conclusion, identification can be achieved by the speaker who maintains a consistent relationship with a particular sympathetic audience. Such an identification through consistency is made possible by perceived audiende-speaker similarity which is comprised of common background, common judgement or evaluation of an issue or group, and the generally perceived condition of "common ground." More specifically, identification is possible when the listener aligns in the same manner as the speaker. This alignment is produced by either association or dissociation, especially in political situations.

Endnotes

[1] Charles A. Kiesler, Barry E. Collins, and Norman Miller, Attitude Change (New York: John Wiley, 1969), p. 155.

[2] Kiesler, p. 157.

[3] Kiesler, p. 155.

[4] Fritz Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: Wiley, 1958), pp. 180-81.

[5] For a more thorough review of general consistency theory and the many specific methods suggested for reducing this "tension," consult Shel Feldman, Cognitive Consistency: Motivational Antecedents and Behavioral Consequents (New York: Academic Press, 1966), Fritz Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: Wiley, 1958), Chester A. Insko, Theories of Attitude Change (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), and Peter Suedfeld, Attitude Change: The Competing Views (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971).

[6] Heider, pp. 180-81.

[7] Kiesler. While all the works listed in notation 5 are excellent reviews, Kiesler is one of the most recent.

[8] William J. McGuire, "The Current Status of Cognitive Consistency Theories," in Cognitive Consistency: Motivational Antecedents and Behavioral Consequents, ed. Shel Feldman (New York: Academic Press, 1966), pp. 1-2.

[9] For a comparison, see McGuire.

[10] Heider's original treatment of his theory appears in "Attitudes and Cognitive Organization," Journal of Psychology, 21 (1946), 107-12. The review provided here is gleaned from Heider's The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations.

[11] Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Co., 1957).

[12] Heider, p. 174.

[13] Kiesler, p. 16.

[14] Charles E. Osgood and Percy H. Tannenbaum, "The Principle of Congruity in the Prediction of Attitude Change," Psychological Review 62 (Jan. 1955), 43.

[15] Alfred Korzybski, Selections from Science and Sanity (Lakeville, Conn.: The International Non-Aristotelian Library, 1976), p. 98.

[16] Osgood, p. 43.

[17] Osgood, p. 43.

[18] Osgood and Tannenbaum's construct is an example, see Osgood.

[19] Heider, p. 176.

[20] Heider, p. 177-78.

[21] Kiesler, p. 166.

[22] Cartwright and Harary, for instance, allow for the designation of relation types other than Heider's two. See Kiesler, pp. 156-70.

[23] Heider, p. 201.

[24] For an in depth treatment of their work, see Kiesler, pp. 155-89.

[25] Insko, Kiesler, and Suedfeld all review consistency theory as it applies to attitude change.

[26] For example, Osgood and Tannenbaum's theory deals with variables of attitude change "with respect to the direction of change." Osgood, p. 42.

[27] Kiesler, p. 156. Cartwright and Harary's consideration of direction and valence attempts to eliminate the two-valued orientation so that situations are not either "balanced" or "unbalanced;" rather, some are more or less balanced than others.

[28] Kiesler, p. 169.

[29] Kiesler, p. 170.

[30] Kiesler, p. 172.

[31] McGuire, p. 5.

[32] Insko, p. 102.

[33] Osgood, p. 43.

[34] Osgood, p. 43.

[35] McGuire, p. 3.

[36] Osgood, p. 44.

[37] For a diagram of these variations, see Kiesler, p. 158.

[38] Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley, Cal.: Univ. of California Press, 1969), p. 20.

[39] Kenneth Burke, "Rhetoric--Old and New," The Journal of General Education, 5 (April 1951), 203, as cited in Marie Hochmuth, "Kenneth Burke and the 'New Rhetoric,'" Quarterly Journal of Speech, 38 (April 1952), 136.

[40] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 20.

[41] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 20.

[42] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 20.

[43] Herbert W. Simons, Nancy N. Berkowitz, and John R. Moyer, "Similarity, Credibility, and Attitude Change: A Review and a Theory," Psychological Bulletin, 73 (Jan. 1970), 1. Credibility in this case is comprised of "trust, respect, and/or ingroup feelings."

[44] Simons, p. 1. For example, a group of anti-nuclear students would view another student speaking out against nuclear energy as less credible than a nuclear physicist speaking out against the same topic. The Physicist has more expertise.

[45] Simons, p. 2.

[46] Simons, p. 3.

[47] Simons, pp. 7-8.

[48] Simons, pp. 7-8.

[49] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 21.

[50] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 19.

[51] Lawrence B. Rosenfeld, "Set Theory: Key to the Understanding of Kenneth Burke's Use of the Term 'Identification,'" Western Speech, 33 (Summer 1969), 177. A "set" in this case could be any individual containing substance or "elements" such as beliefs or experiences. When two individuals share in substance (consubstantiality), two distinct sets have intersected, creating a new set.

[52] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 21.

[53] Luke xxiv. 52-62.

[54] Dennis Day, "Persuasion and the Concept of Identification," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 46 (Oct. 1960), 270-71.

[55] To clarify this point, while a group of military draftees might be somewhat consubstantial with their drill sergeant, they will perhaps not enjoy the level of consubstantiality that a group of volunteers do with a political candidate they have chosen to support.

[56] S. I. Hayakawa, Language in Thought and Action, 4th ed. (New York: Harcourt, 1978), pp. 80-86.

[57] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 22.

[58] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 23.

[59] See Osgood.

[60] Heider, p. 177.

[61] Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives, pp. 19-25.